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ABSTRACT

This practicum was designed to integrate a study skills program throughout special education classes in a middle school. The major objectives were to develop a variety of instructional strategies to meet the students' needs in the area of study skills, to foster the teaching of study skills in each subject area by the special education teachers through direct instruction, and to provide specific segments of time for study skills awareness activities in each subject area of the students' core curriculum. The practicum project involved designing and administering a study skills self-assessment inventory to special education students and a staff needs assessment to special education teachers, and sharing with teachers activities that would enhance classroom study skill instruction. Informal meetings were held between the practicum implementor and special education teachers to offer assistance to teachers and to monitor weekly study skill objectives. Results revealed an increase in the amount of time spent in direct instruction of study skills in each of nine special education classrooms. Students' use of a unified assignment book resulted in a significant increase in the number of students completing long-term and short-term assignments both on time and as directed. Seventy percent of the teachers and 60 percent of the students deemed the practicum successful in teaching study skills that resulted in academic progress. Appendices contain a needs assessment survey for teachers, a study skills self-assessment inventory for students, a list of study skills, samples of teachers' lesson plans, and evaluation questionnaires. (Contains approximately 40 references.) (JDD)

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Integrating a Study Skills Program Throughout Special Education Classes in a Middle School Setting

by

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Cluster XLIV

A Practicum I Report Presented to the
Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Work Setting and Community

The setting in which this practicum took place was a three-story middle school in an upper socioeconomic Kindergarten through Grade 8 public school district. The elementary school district consisted of five Kindergarten through Grade 6 (K-6) elementary schools and one middle school, serving a student population of approximately 3200 students. Each elementary school was comprised of about 450 students, while the middle school housed approximately 950 seventh and eighth grade students and 100 staff members. The community was located in the densely populated northeastern region of the United States.

Due to state-mandated legislation requiring a minimal number of low-to-middle income housing units, the school district was expected to have a substantial increase in the number of K-6 children within the next five years. Subsequently, this suburban district was in the process of making plans for the construction of a sixth elementary school building. Like most other public school districts in the state, the elementary and middle school were under the auspices of the local board of education. The high school was not a part of the local

school district and was one of five other high schools comprising a "regional high school district." There are a total of six regional high school districts throughout the state.

The middle school, then fifteen years in existence, had one building principal and two vice-principals, with an office staff of two secretaries and one clerk typist. Each vice-principal was responsible for one of the two grade levels in addition to other administrative duties. The building was divided into two houses, House A and House B, connected by corridors on each of the three floors. The school housed a guidance department, composed of one seventh and one eighth grade guidance counselor assisted by their secretary. The district's Department of Special Services employed one speech pathologist and a Child Study Team (CST), consisting of one school psychologist, one Learning Disability Teaching Consultant (LDTC), and one social worker, servicing the special education population in the building.

The remainder of the faculty was composed of fifty-one regular education teachers, ten special education teachers, one basic skills teacher, an English as a Second Language teacher (ESL), one media specialist, two school nurses, three instructional assistants, and two media-center assistants. Other staff members included six cafeteria aides, ten kitchen workers, and nine full-time or part-time custodians.

From the first settlements in 1685 to the time it was officially established by the Quakers, Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Dutch Reformed religious sects as a fertile, agricultural township in 1848,

this town had grown to a population of about 28,000. A small number of family farms still existed, with a majority of the land composed almost exclusively of upper-middle to upper-class single-family homes. The working residents primarily held professional positions, or owned successful, independent businesses. A much smaller percentage of the working population were in either skilled or unskilled technical occupations.

Over the preceding decade, this rapidly growing community had experienced an influx of housing developments. Much of this growth had been the result of families with school-age children moving from the more citified areas, seeking newer and more expansive homes, situated on larger, rural-type properties having a lower property tax rate. An additional advantage to settling in this community was its close proximity to one of the largest metropolitan cities in the nation. Many seeking to relocate to this area were influenced by the fact that a majority of the graduating high school seniors (85%) went on to college and were supported by families who held high expectations for their children's academic achievements. It is important to note that competition was highly prevalent - socially, economically, politically, academically, and religiously. Children were aware at a young age of the role they were expected to fulfill due to the expectations of their parents and peers. This made it especially difficult for any child who had been classified to feel "like everyone else" when this type of pressure existed around him or her.

The citizens of this community were very much interested in ensuring that their educational, social, environmental, and political

needs are developed and met. They promoted these concepts through active participation and by making their opinions known at the town and local board of education meetings. Contrary to other public school districts comparable in character, this district's voters approved, rather than rejected, the elementary school budget for the three consecutive years. In addition, an unusually high number of recreational programs provided a variety of opportunities for residents of all ages throughout the year.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The writer, one of ten special education teachers in a middle school setting, had been an educator for eighteen years and brought to this position accreditations in nursery school, early childhood, elementary, and special education plus the experience of teaching children who vary in age from pre-school through twelfth grade. During this time period, the writer had owned and directed a nursery school and taught regular and special education classes.

In addition to a Reading Resource room program, the writer had been assigned for the 3 years preceding this practicum to teach a Study Skills class to seventh and eighth grade students. Study skills are a combination of abilities that have been learned for the purpose of acquiring knowledge and confidence. The skills in this curricula included the teaching of effective methods of gathering, recording, and evaluating information, and the ability to transfer knowledge to new situations.

CHAPTER II
STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

The problem, as experienced by the writer, involved seventh and eighth grade special education students in a middle school setting, who demonstrated substantial deficiencies in the area of organizational and special study skills in the basic subject areas. The population involved consisted of forty-three seventh graders and forty-four eighth graders, all of whom had been classified as learning disabled, emotionally disturbed, or perceptionally impaired. Typically, a minimal amount of time was allotted for study skill instruction in this school district throughout the elementary grades. However, the writer had found it to be randomly organized; given strong emphasis by some teachers and barely covered by others.

As a special education teacher, the writer taught five remedial Reading classes and one Study Skills class in this setting. The writer worked directly with many of these classified students and was concerned about their inability or lack of knowledge in the area of study skills. If this situation were improved, the likelihood existed that many of these students would have been mainstreamed into regular classes.

Their self-confidence level would have heightened as their grades improved, and would more than likely have encountered a more positive attitude and collaborative relationship with their teachers, parents, and non-classified peers.

After having considered each of the given situations, the writer ascertained that more than one-half of the ninety-seven seventh and eighth grade classified students clearly demonstrated substantial deficiencies in the area of study skills in the basic subject areas. To improve the students' overall ability to recognize and appropriately apply study strategies was the purpose of this practicum.

Problem Documentation

Evidence of study skill deficiencies among the special education population was supported by low test scores (see Table1 for the Number of Classified Students Scoring Above or Below Grade Level

Table 1

Number of Classified Students Scoring Above or Below Grade Level on the 1991 Study Skills Subtest of the California Achievement Test

Grade	Above	Below
7	12	24
8	13	24

Note. Ninety-seven classified students were enrolled in the middle school. Seven students in each grade level were never tested.

on the 1991 Study Skills Subtest of the California Achievement Test), teacher surveys, student questionnaires, interviews, and student class records. For example, during the spring of 1991, a majority of the seventh and eighth grade classified students scored one or more years below grade level on the study skills subtest of the California Achievement test (see Table 2 for the Number of Classified Students Scoring Above or Below Grade Level Within A Given Time Span). These scores reflected the fact that

Table 2

Number of Classified Students Scoring Above or Below Grade Level Within a Given Time Span

		Level	
Grade	Time Span	Above	Below
7			
	Less than one year	4	3
	One to two years	4	10
	Two to three years	1	6
	Three or more years	3	5

table continues

Grade	Time Span	Above	Below
8			
	Less than one year	4	4
	One to two years	3	4
	Two to three years	2	6
	Three or more years	4	10

the absence of formal study skill instruction contributed to the students below grade level test scores. In addition, 20 of the 25 seventh and eighth grade special education students who completed a study skills self-assessment inventory (see Appendix B) at that time, demonstrated a need to improve their academic performance and awareness of these skills in more than one area (see Table 3 for Selected Study Skills Self-Assessment Inventory Response Data).

Additional evidence was provided during the spring of 1991 when a needs assessment survey designed by the writer (see Appendix A) was issued to a group of educational professionals who are directly involved in the education of classified students in the middle school. Twelve of the twelve surveyed recognized a serious weakness in the area of study skills and in their students' overall approach to learning. Simultaneously, a four-week period of recordkeeping, validated through teacher's grade books, disclosed that 33% of the seventh and eighth grade special education students either failed to turn in homework assignments, or turn them in on

time. Teacher and student interviews, requesting what part of the school curriculum they thought was in need of further development, were conducted for the two weeks that followed. Their responses revealed additional work in the area of study skills was a top priority.

Table 3

Selected Student Study Skills Self-Assessment Inventory Response Data

Item No.	Question	Response Pattern Seldom	Sometimes	Often
24	How frequently do I use at least one particular study skill which might help me to learn easier in each subject area?	20	3	2
25	How frequently do I think about what can be done to improve my grades in school?	1	3	21

Causative Analysis

The writer questioned the existence of a number of circumstances that if present, may have directly or indirectly been instrumental in causing the problem in the her school setting. It was believed that it

may have originated from district policies and curriculum requirements, teacher expectations, and an increased need for teacher training and parental involvement.

Many administrators, educators, and parents assumed that non-classified and classified students have acquired at least an array of organizational and study skills by the time they reach the middle school level. Based upon this assumption, little time was spent in the actual teaching of study strategies in the seventh and eighth grades. As a result, curriculums in various disciplines continued to be written and approved, short and long-term assignments were issued, class lectures continued, and in many instances, little regard was given to the depth of a student's deficiencies in study skills. The actual implementation of an integrated study skills program throughout a student's core curriculum had not been given strong consideration in the elementary grades.

In order to implement a curriculum that seemed to allow little if any consideration for the teaching of study skills on a routine basis in any of the content areas, the writer's school district was faced with a dilemma. As the needs of its students continued to grow, the district found itself amending its curricula in an attempt to suit these needs. Given the time constraints, an overloaded curriculum could have resulted. With all the societal demands placed upon the students and their families, parents, particularly those that were single and/or working, the tendency to expect the schools to pick-up the slack due to the limited amount of time they spent with their children seemed difficult to avoid. All too often, these parents

believed that the schools had the responsibility to rectify or close any voids in their child's formal education.

An additional causative consideration was the reality that home-school communication was often limited to a once-a-year parent conference week, an annual Individual Evaluation Plan (IEP) meeting for classified students, district newsletters, school memos, and an occasional telephone conversation. Parents and teachers needed to communicate more often than a formally scheduled meeting twice each year in order to close any gaps existing between home and school. Lack of a collaborative effort between a student's parents and his teachers, particularly in the area of study skills, severely limited a student's potential to succeed.

Another possible cause of the problem stemmed from a classified child's possible lack of motivational skills. If a student lacks the motivation or desire to learn, and is incapable of recognizing or choosing a particular study strategy to fall back on for assistance, social and academic failure often results. The so-called "ladder of success" seems to be a difficult and somewhat unrealistic upward climb, rather than an achievable reality.

The local board of education had previously approved a limited criteria for students able to enroll in the district's Study Skills classes. Taught as a separate course apart from a student's regular curriculum, the classes were strictly limited to those who had been retained and those classified or non-classified students who were in need of additional support in order to maintain their placement in mainstreamed classes. Although the concept of such a class was

aimed at the establishment of individual study skill strategies, little opportunity existed for the transference of such skills to other area of the curriculum.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

For close to half a century, information concerning the importance of study skills and its link to student achievement had been stressed in educational literature. Student deficiencies in this area continued to be a major concern to professional educators, students, parents, educational administrators, and researchers. Marshak (1986) acknowledged this concern by noting that "the recognition of study skills as basic and essential has grown widely since 1979, as teachers and administrators have become more aware" (p. 2) of the importance of study skills. Weinstein, Ridley, Dahl, and Weber (1988), Malena and Atwood (1985), and Smith and Smith (1989) all recognized the difficulties many students encountered while employing and adapting study skills throughout their educational careers. The mastery and transference of specific learning strategies is particularly difficult for students with learning disabilities. Hoover (1989) maintained that students with learning disabilities exhibit a large number of deficits in their ability to utilize study skills effectively. Bos, Anders, Filip, and Jaffe (1989) substantiated this finding with their claim that students with learning disabilities lack "startegies that promote effective learning within the context of content area classrooms" (p. 389).

What specific kinds of deficiencies do classified students, particularly those that are learning disabled, experience? Wood, White, and Miederhoff (1988) stressed that "many mainstreamed students with learning disabilities have difficulty taking notes because of an inability to organize ideas or concepts....Teachers may need to modify the procedures for teaching notetaking skills" (p. 107). Scruggs and Mastropieri (1990) discussed their concern with the learning disabled students poorly developed memory skills.

Compared to their non-classified peers, Graves and Levin (1989) concluded that learning disabled students are significantly more deficient than their non-classified peers in their ability to decipher and remember the main idea of a textbook passage. Study skill deficiencies, not discovered and corrected in grade school, continue to blossom in the years to come. Wade and Reynolds (1989) found that a number of secondary school and college students had great difficulty comprehending and retaining reading material. The authors discovered a lack in their subjects development of "metacognitive awareness" (p. 6). Davila (1990) claimed that "only a minority of parents and educators...believe that public schools are doing an excellent job of preparing...(special education) students for education and work beyond high school" (p. 20).

Further review of the literature supported the existence of a problem when study skills was taught as a separate entity apart from the rest of a student's curriculum. Shepherd (1979) supported the belief that the adaptation of study skills from one subject to another was not an innate ability that students intuitively exercised.

Davis (1990) contended that "common sense suggests that instruction in study skills is useless unless the students are able to transfer their skills to a specific task" (p. 277). Research suggested that without such integration, that is, direct instruction by the teacher of each subject area, little opportunity existed for the application and transference of such skills.

The literature, viewing the problem as multi-faceted, revealed several causes of the problem. According to Simpson (1984), students who lacked age-appropriate study skills that fostered independent learning because they were never instructed in this area, were incapable of self-monitoring techniques, and had no concept of how to adapt the skills they did possess to the various subject areas. Rooney (1989) asserted that mildly handicapped youngsters lacked appropriate study skill strategies because educational systems had failed to recognize the individual needs of their students. Garner (1990) noted "five reasons for failure to use strategies are...(a) poor cognitive monitoring, (b) primitive routines that guide a product, (c) a meager knowledge base, (d) attributions and classroom goals that do not support strategy use, and (e) minimal transfer" (p. 517). The existence of these weaknesses are further complicated when a student lacks the motivation to improve their approach to learning (Bishop, 1989).

Much consideration has also been given to both teacher training and the expectations of the professionals with whom the students come in contact. The Madawaska High School (1981) discovered through the basic learning skills program known as Project CAPABLE,

that "content area teachers are not trained to respond to deficiencies in learning skills...and assume that the necessary skills have already been taught in the lower grades" (p. v). Harris and Pressley (1991) addressed their concerns that the approach taken to strategy instruction often took the form of expecting students to absorb the information they had been taught by listening, memorizing, and regurgitating the facts, precisely as instructed.

Other possible causes for the escalation of study skill deficiencies in recent literature emphasized societal changes. McCormick (1990) discussed the "swollen nonacademic curriculum" (p. 58) that seemed to disallow room on the school agenda for other items due to "a flood tide of societal changes" (p. 54). This took into consideration the degree of parental involvement in the educational process of their children. It is no secret that our changing society has placed far more demands upon today's parents and children than in past generations. Different than a few decades ago, a larger gap between home and school has been created due to the additional demands of today's working parents. These demands often constituted to what extent parents were involved in their child's education. There was a often a tight scheduling of events taking place in today's families (i.e. music lessons, religious instruction, etc.) complicated by many parents working (McCormick, 1990). He claimed that as much as "one-third of all elementary students return to empty homes" (p. 55). Many parents could not seem to find the time to even consider what might be going on in their child's daily academic regime.

McCormick (1990) reported the following information:

> There is little doubt that many of today's parentsare pressed for time. 73% of mothers with school-age children work outside the home. Nearly one-fourth of all children under age 18 live with a single parent, and only 7% of school-age children live in a two-parent household where there is only one wage earner. (p. 55)

It must be considered that the existence of social instability, exemplified by a high divorce rate and illegal drugs, contributed to a student's insecurity and lack of motivational skills. When a child's needs failed to be met at home, whatever the reason(s) may be, additional responsibilities fell upon our nation's schools. Germain (1991), Dismuke (1991), and Wang, Haertel, and Wolberg (1990) conclusively promoted the move towards increasing parental involvement in the education of children, in order to better serve a child's academic, as well as social and emotional needs.

The harsh reality of a poorly developed repertoire of study skill strategies was found in an adult literacy report issued by the Southport Institute for Policy Analysis (1989). This study discovered that "at present, the field of basic skills education is intellectually, and politically weak, and fragmented" due to "years of neglect" (p. 1). A failure to integrate a study skills program throughout a student's core curriculum was a disservice to the overall educational process.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The following goals and expectations were projected for this practicum:

1. The projected goal of the writer was to integrate a study skills program throughout the core curriculum of the classified seventh and eighth grade students.

2. The program was developed in order to increase the repertoire of meaningful study skills that were not provided by the core curriculum for all of the classified students in her middle school.

It was hoped that this would be accomplished through the collaborative efforts of the writer, the teachers and instructional assistants of the writer's middle school special education department, the administration, parents, other support staff personnel, and the students themselves. It is for the betterment of their daily lives that this practicum had been initiated.

Expected Outcomes

This practicum was initiated and implemented over a three-month period during the 1991-92 academic year. The writer projected the following outcomes for the purpose of solving the problem:

1. The writer and teachers will develop a variety of teaching strategies that will meet the needs of their students in the area of study skills.

2. Drawing from their area of expertise, purposeful study skills will be addressed by the special education teacher in each subject area, setting aside specific segments of time for the purpose of addressing these needs.

3. At least one class period each week in each of the core subjects will provide study skills awareness activities. Subjects belonging to the core curriculum include Language Arts, Mathematics, Reading, Science, and Social Studies.

4. Homework completion will be closely monitored by the teacher and parent on a needs basis.

5. Teachers and students will be given the opportunity to informally discuss the specific study skills that they feel need to be addressed in their particular subject area at least once each week.

6. A significant number of classified students will be able to transfer study skills from one subject to another throughout their core curriculum.

Measurement of Outcomes

The writer planned to monitor and assess the attainment of the specific objectives in the following manner:

Objective 1.

The special education teachers will develop a variety of teaching strategies that will be aimed at meeting the established needs of their students in the area of study skills. Weekly meetings, scheduled by the writer with each of the other nine special education teachers, are expected to take place in an effort to monitor the progress of the program. The writer, acting as facilitator, will conduct question and answer sessions for the purpose of developing a variety of teaching methods and ensuring each student's individual needs. These sessions will serve as a type of "brainstorming" period for the teachers whereby time will be provided for sharing and comparing what they have found successful or unsuccessful teaching techniques. This process will be deemed successful if an accurate, on-going log is kept by the writer recording a list of at least four successful teaching strategies utilized to teach a particular study skill in each subject area during the implementation period.

Objective 2.

Each special education teacher will address purposeful study skills that specifically relate to the subject area that they teach. Skills taught will be recorded in their lesson plans, thereby noting specific segments of time set aside for activities directly related to study skills. Copies of these plans will be forwarded to the writer and to the building principal for confirmation. These plans will serve as a form of written documentation outlining an individual teachers weekly objectives in the area of study skills. This process will be deemed successful if at least four particular study skills are

introduced or reviewed by all ten of the participating special education teachers in each of the core subjects and if eight of the ten surveyed, including the writer, find the skills taught valuable to their students' educational process, as noted in the writer's log.

Objective 3.

It is expected that the equivalent of one class period per unit will be set aside in each of the core subjects in order to provide study skills awareness activities. This will be indicated in each teacher's lesson plans with copies of said plans to be forwarded to the writer and building principal. The writer will support the other special education teachers by providing appropriate activities that reinforce the various components of the study skills curricula. Given the fact that teachers are contractually obligated to write lesson plans on a weekly basis, documentation of the specific study skills taught will easily be noted. The providing of supplemental materials or activities by the writer to each of the other nine special education teachers would serve as an incentive to teach those study skills most appropriately related to their subject. This process will be deemed successful if each of the other nine special education teachers cooperate with the writer by actively participating in this joint venture.

Objective 4.

An increased number of classified students in each special education class at the writer's school, will complete their homework on time as a result of this program. Using an assignment book issued by the special education department for standardization purposes,

each classified student will demonstrate his ability to keep an accurate account of his daily and long-term homework assignments. These assignment books will be monitored by the students' teachers, and if necessary, by the parents. Each classified student will demonstrate his ability to keep an accurate written account of his daily homework assignments. Prior to this time, students were consistently encouraged to write down their assignments in the assignment book of their choice. Depending upon the student, this may have been a pad of paper specifically designed for assignments, a sheet of looseleaf or scrap paper, a page in the back of a subject notebook, the cover of a textbook, or no written reminder whatsoever. Some assignment pads were so small that they were easily misplaced. Providing a uniform looseleaf-sized book with dates, subjects, monthly calendars, and class schedule boxes pre-printed for each student will offer a positive example of how to organize and plan for long and short-term assignments. This process will be deemed successful if 40 of the 50 randomly selected classified students completed their homework assignments in a timely fashion throughout the implementation period.

Objective 5.

The special education teachers at the writer's school will build into their lesson plans one class period for the sole purpose of discussing with their students what specific study skills they feel need to be addressed in their subject area. In order to ascertain that this strategy is implemented, a list of selected topics such as outlining, notetaking, reference skills, listening skills and many more

will be forwarded to the writer by the subject area teacher. The list will also include the date, period, and any other information that the individual classroom teacher feels may be important to note and provide the writer with an additional form of written documentation that a variety of study skills are being taught. This process will be deemed successful if the other nine special education teachers send their lists and notes to me, thus demonstrating their participation in this portion of the program.

Objective 6.

It is expected that a significant number of classified students will be able to transfer selected study skill strategies from one subject to another throughout their core curriculum. The writer will assess this objective by conducting one-to-one structured interviews with each of the other nine special education teachers and a random sampling of the ninety-seven classified students. Open-ended questions will be designed and asked by the writer. Oral interviews will provide the writer with first-hand information that may not be adequately explained in written form. This process will be deemed successful if eight of the ten teachers and 40 of the 50 students selected verbally indicate specific situations when various study strategies have been utilized in more than one subject area (see Table 4 for Summative List of Outcomes).

Table 4

Summative List of Outcomes

Expected Outcomes	Method of Evaluation	Standard of Achievement
1. Teachers will develop a variety of teaching strategies that will meet the needs of their students in the area of study skills.	Logged weekly meetings	10 of 10 special education teachers in each of the core subjects will have utilized at least four successful teaching strategies.
2. Purposeful study skills will be addressed by the special education teacher in each subject area.	Lesson plans and writer's log	10 of 10 special education teachers in each of the core subjects will find the skills taught valuable to their students' educational process.
3. Study skills awareness activities reinforcing the study skills curricula will be incorporated into student lessons.	Lesson plans	10 of 10 special education teachers will actively participate in the joint venture.
4. An increased number of students in each special education class will complete their homework on time.	Student assignment book	40 of 50 randomly selected students will have completed their homework assignments in a timely fashion.
5. Teachers and students will discuss specific study skills that both groups feel need to be addressed.	Teacher logs and lesson plans	10 of 10 special education teachers will forward a record of the results of their discussion periods.
6. Students will be able to transfer learned study strategies throughout the core curriculum.	Structured interviews and questionnaire	8 of 10 special education teachers and 40 of 50 students will verbally indicate specific study strategies utilized in more than one subject area.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

The writer had found that a majority of the classified students in the middle school demonstrated deficiencies in their repertoire of meaningful study skills not provided by the core curriculum. The literature substantiated the existence of these weaknesses, and suggested a multitude of solutions.

In order for a study skills curriculum to be successfully integrated, Malena and Atwood (1985) believed that teachers and students needed to work jointly on the "cognitive and metacognitive levels" (p. 2) by going through the various steps of what they called the PREP study system. This system is a four-step process that has adapted both Rosenshine's instructional model and Pearson and Gallagher's method. The PREP system had been designed to help the student develop a repertoire of study skills as a result of previewing materials, actively reading in search of posed questions, examining graphic organizers, and using prompts in an effort to utilize multisensory learning. The main theme of their paper was to emphasize the importance of educators teaching study skills to their students by showing them a true purpose for the necessity of such

skills while demonstrating to them how they might be used in other situations. A list of "how-to-do-it's" (p.2) simply would not suffice.

Weinstein, Ridley, Dahl, and Weber (1988) reiterated Malena and Atwood's (1985) view that study strategies should be taught to the learning disabled student by means of direct instruction with practice and feedback, interwoven into each of the student's regular classes. Weinstein et al. emphasized the use of "elaboration strategies" (p. 18), drawing from the student's previous knowledge and experience and using this information to help find a meaningful relationship to a newly processed body of knowledge. Teaching study skills as a separate entity may be of little value to a student if no connection is made between the study skill strategies being taught and how they directly relate to their everyday life in a positive way. Weinstein et al. recognized the importance of teaching study strategies in the various subject areas, particularly for the "educationally disadvantaged" (p. 17), and promoted the training of educators in how to effectively address these skills in their respective classrooms.

Smith and Smith (1989) reported on a Schoolwide Study Skills Program that had been developed and successfully implemented in a public school district in Mesa, Arizona. According to their findings, the program had met its goal by successfully mainstreaming classified students into regular education classes thus supporting the regular classroom education initiative. This was accomplished as a result of the collaborative efforts of both regular and special education teachers who shared their areas of expertise by mutually

combining the use of "multisensory teaching, direct instruction in skill development,... and content expertise" (p. 23).

The literature reviewed fully supported the integration of a study skills program throughout a student's educational curriculum. Each author strongly advocated that teachers need to present study skill strategies to their students through direct instruction, demonstrating the utility of employing these skills and guiding their students toward successfully adapting the learned procedures throughout their educational career. The models recommended by Malena and Atwood (1985) centered on the integrating of study skills into the school program of the non-classified child, while the teacher implementation strategies of Weinstein et al. (1988) and Smith and Smith (1989) centered on similar programming for the educationally disadvantaged or learning disabled student. The literature in this area overwhelmingly encouraged educators to (1) develop teaching strategies that respond to the individual needs and differences of their students, (2) collaborate the instruction of study skill strategy efforts with other classroom teachers, and (3) guide his or her students with constructive feedback in working towards the self-motivation process. The ultimate goal was to see that the student demonstrated the ability to transfer and adapt a multitude of study skill strategies in various settings when the need arose (Malena & Atwood, 1985; Smith & Smith, 1989; Weinstein et al., 1988).

Much of the literature stressed the importance of parental involvement in a child's educational process. Dismuke (1991),

McCormick (1990), Germain (1991), Davies (1991), and Reutzel and Fawson (1990) all suggested parental involvement in a student's education as a means of acquiring higher academic success. With an "overloaded" curriculum, educators look to parental support for the reinforcement of subject material. Winkelreid-Dobson (1990) deviated from the norm by supporting the concept of parents teaching their own children at home with an emphasis on study skills instruction.

In the classroom, Dunn, Beaudry, and Klavas (1989) and Slavin (1989, 1991) recommended cooperative learning as a valuable teaching technique for increasing self-esteem and academic achievement. Cooperative learning offers students the opportunity to work in pairs or in a small group to solve a mutual problem or develop a particular skill such as notetaking (Wood, 1990). This teaching strategy can assist students in helping one another to stay focused on the learning and monitoring of new material, thus promoting metacognition (Berliner, 1990; Casanova, 1990). Ellis and Lenz (1990) and Derry (1988) elaborated on those organizational and study techniques which foster content-area learning and the ability to choose specific learning strategies to solve a learning problem.

Literature has also suggested a number of ways that educators can collaborate their efforts for the purpose of improving their students' study skills. Through the use of direct instruction (Smith & Smith, 1989), strategic teaching (Ogle, 1988), and the application of study strategies to content-area classes (Davis, 1990), students would be introduced to an array of learning strategies and guided by each

of his teachers in how to apply this accumulated knowledge meaningfully.

Kaplan (1988), Lent (1983), Marshak (1986), Gossen (1983), McDonald, Dickerson-Young, Florey (1986), and the Staff of the Communication & Learning Center (1987) all provided daily classroom activities and instructional strategies such as how to set goals, organizing one's time, establishing a productive study environment, hints on preparation for test-taking, several additional study skills and a number of specific teaching suggestions.

In an effort to formulate possible solutions to the problem, a variety of other ideas were considered. These included:

(1) Parent workshops to be held for the purpose of making the parents aware of how they might assist in the implementation of an integrated study skills program.

(2) Time would be allotted for an after-school period whereby classified students will have an opportunity to receive assistance in test preparation or comprehension of homework assignments and other class projects.

(3) Each student would keep a journal of the successes they have experienced using the study skills learned.

(4) An article would be published in the district newsletter emphasizing the importance of parental involvement in the enhancement of developing and making use of the appropriate learning strategies.

(5) The writer would conduct a study skills workshop on the district professional day open to all regular and special education

teachers and instructional assistants.

Description of Selected Solution

Given the fact that classified seventh and eighth grade students have demonstrated a need to increase their repertoire of meaningful study skills, a solution strategy was formulated. This solution strategy stemmed from the writer's comprehensive review of the wealth of literature available on the problem, having taken into account the job setting, the population and the available resources. Based upon these factors, the writer was prepared to implement a series of justifiable procedures, aimed at integrating a study skills program throughout the special education classes in the writer's middle school setting.

Taking into account budgetary, time, and personal constraints, district policies, board-approved course curricula, staff and community support, the following components were to be incorporated into this practicum:

1. Collaboration of Efforts

   Unlike traditional practices, seventh and eighth grade special education teachers would collaborate their efforts to integrate a study skills program throughout the core curriculum. Weekly meetings were to be scheduled between the middle school special education staff and the writer for the purpose of formative evaluation of the program. The special education director and supervisor would be given notice of meeting times and invited to

attend.

2. Monitorization of Students

Each teacher was to engage in the behavior modification program of their choosing, aimed at monitoring student test results. Under this program, students would be accountable for completing their homework assignments as directed, being on time, and keeping a daily assignment book and calendar listing the short and long-term projects. Parents were to be asked to verify home-study as the need arose. The writer was to act as facilitator for the special education teachers, parents, and students, when implementing this portion of the program.

3. Direct Instruction

Students would receive direct instruction from their teachers in listening and organizational skills, test-taking skills, researching, reporting, critical reading, problem-solving, self-motivation techniques, and other specific learning strategies pertinent to each subject area.

4. Computer Mastery Testing

The students were to use computers for mastery testing and the completion of written class projects whenever possible. This would be particularly useful for those students with weak handwriting skills.

5. Personal Logs

The writer would keep a written account of conversations held and events that led up to the culmination of the project. This program was expected to succeed because of a given number

of intrinsic factors. First and foremost, the director of special services was enthusiastic as this writer to see such a program activated in the middle school. The success of this program could lead to its implementation throughout the five elementary schools in the district. Support would be forthcoming from both the director and supervisor of special services, the curriculum supervisor, the principal, and the middle school's child study team. Secondly, additional time would be allotted in each of the subject areas for direct instruction and feedback of study strategies applicable to that specific study area. The students would have more opportunities to explore the various study skills and discuss how they might be applied both in and out of school.

The seventh and eighth grade special education teachers approached this project with high expectations for success. In the conversations held between the writer and the other faculty members of the special education department, all felt that "something" had to be done to improve their students inefficient use of study skills and inability to transfer those strategies learned from one subject to another. Each teacher was willing to make a collaborative effort to help ensure the success of the program.

Parents were to play an integral role in the implementation of the program and would be informed during parent conferences of the purpose of this program. In this way, they would be made aware of how important their role is in supplementing the objectives. Having met with the parents at this year's "Meet the Teacher Night," the writer found them to be more than willing to work with the teachers

in every way possible in order to improve their children's study skills.

The writer's personal experiences had found students at this age level to be particularly responsive in a positive way when their personal feelings are considered by genuinely concerned, supportive adults. Throughout various stages of this program, the students themselves will be given the opportunity to exercise their independence, under the guidance of their teachers and parents, in choosing the study skill strategies that they feel will best serve their educational needs.

Throughout the course of this practicum, the writer would serve as a resource for district personnel or parents who request additional information or activities in relation to the enhancement of a study skills curriculum. On several occasions in the past, the guidance department and regular classroom teachers have requested the writer's assistance in dealing with students whose study skills are weak or ineffective. With such a program in place, the middle school staff in particular, was expected to be highly supportive of the writer's efforts, especially when dealing with mainstreamed, classified students.

Report of Action Taken

Prior to the implementation of this practicum, several procedures were addressed by the writer. First and foremost, the writer met with both the district director and supervisor of special services and

the middle school child study team to discuss the goals and objectives of this practicum. All parties were highly supportive and volunteered to assist the writer in any way possible. Texts, workbooks and other materials were ordered by the writer for the purpose of implementing and supplementing the board-approved study skills curriculum. A copy of the writer's proposal was distributed to the district director of special services.

Student records were then reviewed by the writer to derive the Study Skill's subtest scores of the 1991 California Achievement Test for each classified seventh and eighth grade student to determine the percentage of students below grade in that particular subtest. This investigation was followed by a needs assessment survey designed by the writer and distributed to15 educational professionals consisting of special education teachers and child study team members who were directly involved in the education of classified students in that middle school.

Meetings were held between the writer and the nine other special education teachers to discuss district policy concerning study skills and implementation procedures. The writer kept an ongoing log or record of the topics covered. These discussions were originally planned to take place weekly and were to include all ten of the building special education teachers. This did not transpire as originally planned for three reasons. First, the teachers' scheduled lunch and preparation periods were staggered, therefore making it impossible for the entire group to be free at any point in time during the school day. Secondly, the teacher of the Life Skills class in the

writer's school felt that due to the non-traditional format of this class's curriculum, the class should not be included in this practicum. This unexpected circumstance changed the number of special education teachers from 10 to 9. As a result, the total number of classified students included in this practicum dropped from 97 to 91. Thirdly, holding formal weekly meetings proved to be unnecessary. The writer met informally with each of the other eight teachers, during her preparation or lunch period, and after school when necessary, for the purpose of offering assistance to each teacher as well the monitoring of weekly study skill objectives. Once each month, during the after-school special education department meeting scheduled by the supervisor of special services, the value of the uniform homework book and inclusion of study skills were discussed. Successful instructional startegies, use of the homework assignment book, and the development of classroom activities for the development of study skills were also included as part of the meeting agenda (see Appendix D).

The writer made was available to supply the other eight teachers with activities that would enhance their study skill instruction. It was acknowledged that the teachers' lesson plans, though a district contractual obligation, would reflect the outcome of the meetings held with the writer and be considered written documentation. The proceedings of these meetings were shared by the writer with the director or supervisor of special services upon request.

A projected timeline of eight weeks was set aside for the implementation of this practicum. During the first week of

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ABSTRACT

Integrating a Study Skills Program Throughout Special Education Classes in a Middle School Setting. Lotz, Dianne M. V., 1992: Practicum Report, Nova University Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. Descriptors: Study Skills/Learning Strategies/Instructional Strategies/Integration/Organizational Skills/Collaborative Teaching/ Middle School/Parent Involvement.

This practicum was designed to integrate a Study Skills Program throughout special education classes in a middle school. The major objectives were to develop a variety of instructional strategies to meet the students' needs in the area of study skills, to foster the teaching of study skills in each subject area by the special education teachers through direct instruction, and by providing specific segments of time for study skills awareness activities in each subject area of the students' core curriculum.

The writer designed and administered a study skills self-assessment inventory to the classified students involved and a staff needs assessment prior to the implementation period; developed a list of questions to elicit information as a means of evaluating the success of the program; disseminated the information gathered and shared the focus of this practicum with district special education teachers and support personnel on a district professional day.

The results of this practicum were analyzed and the data revealed an increase in the amount of time spent in direct instruction in each of the special education classrooms. Use of a unified assignment book resulted in a significant increase in the number of students completing long and short-term assignments both on time and as directed. 70% of the teachers and 60% of the students questioned deemed the study skills taught or utilized during the course of the marking period successful with regards to their overall academic progress. Special education teachers and their students were given the opportunity to discuss specific learning strategies and organizational skills, homework completion was monitored, and a transference of study skill applications from one subject to another was noted.

implementation, each subject area teacher introduced the value of study skills using prior knowledge as a basis for learning. An informal study skills self-assessment inventory was issued by the writer to all classified students in the middle school to determine their individual strengths, weaknesses, and learning modalities. Uniform assignment books and calendars, purchased through the special services budget, were distributed to each student by the writer and other special education teachers to be used for the purpose of managing their time wisely and remembering daily homework assignments and other school related needs. A behavior modification program was initiated by each of the nine special education teachers as a means of motivating the students, emphasizing good behavior, practicing time management techniques, and monitoring test results and assignment completion.

Week two involved the writer and each subject area teacher with the distribution of texts and workbooks in all subject areas as well as the introduction of the study skills component of the curriculum by each of the teachers in their respective subject. Study skills texts and workbooks were distributed to the students in the two district study skills classes and reviewed by the writer and students for the purpose of answering any questions that they may have concerning the study skills course. The other subject area classes were not issued study skills texts but were introduced to various study strategies throughout the implementation period and thereafter in conjunction with their subject area curricula.

In addition to textbook distribution and review, the writer

encouraged both the students and other special education teachers to participate in an after-school tutorial session during the third week of the implementation period. The sessions were to be 45 minutes in length, every Thursday, and available to students for the purpose of offering them assistance in test preparation or comprehension of homework assignments and class projects. The writer placed a sign-up sheet on the wall near her classroom door for those interested in attending. The other subject area teachers acknowledged the session as well by verbally encouraging their students to make use of this homework assistance program. None of the classified students volunteered to stay an additional period at the end of the school day. Alternate days were offered, but no response was received. When questioned by the writer the reason for the lack of attendance, many of the students in her classes felt that they "did not want to have to stay after school more than necessary," or that they "didn't need to." The special education teachers, with the exception of the writer, had previously scheduled after-school commitments throughout the marking period, but would stay after school or meet with a student needing assistance on an "as-needed" basis.

In the four weeks that followed, direct instruction and active student participation were highly noticeable. Small group study skill instruction, facilitated by the subject area teacher, continued in each of the special education classes. Parents were requested by each subject area teacher during Parent Conference Week to check their child's assignment book and initialize it weekly or as often as the individual need dictated. Students who have earned "no homework"

certificates, "free study" periods, extra credit or other such rewards through their behavior modification program, were able to begin utilizing them at this time. In addition, the students themselves through a cooperative learning classroom experience, conducted surveys to ascertain the study habits of their peers. Originally the results were to be posted on a classroom bulletin board. The writer chose not to include this activity out of concern for those students who had not been successful in utilizing any of the learning strategies or study skills stressed. As an alternative, the subject area teacher and the students held a general discussion on the variety of skills practiced.

The eighth through tenth week of implementation found an integrated study skills program fully in place throughout each of the special education classes in the writer's middle school. Discussions between the writer and the other special education teachers concerning the inclusion of study skills into their curricula continued as previously outlined. It was during this period of time that the writer has planned the students to log their positive and negative experiences as a result of choosing one learning strategy over another. Inasmuch as this may have been a sound and enlightening activity for both the teachers and students, the element of finding the time to monitor the completion of the logs became a factor worthy of consideration. In lieu of the log, a classroom activity was scheduled whereby the teachers and students collaboratively formulated lists of the learning startegies that they found most successful in a workshop-type of session. This list was expanded

upon as the program continued.

Having been instructed in a variety of skills in every subject area, the special education students were issued short and long-term assignments involving the use of these skills. Due dates for the assignments were staggered based upon the time needed to complete the task. This was coordinated, whenever possible, among the special education teachers in an attempt to prevent a number of assignments from being due on the same day.

A number of hands-on and evaluative experiences were collaboratively planned by the writer and the other eight special education teachers. Students participated in small group activities in each subject area for the purpose of demonstrating how cooperative learning can be a useful, problem-solving technique. Based upon previously acquired word-processing skills and the availability of computer terminals, students used a computer to complete the written component of their projects when applicable. The writer chose to issue tests to be completed by her students on the computer, once again, based upon availability. Each student presented at least one of his or her projects to their class, discussing the organizational and study skills he or she found helpful in completing their assignment. Students were given the option to have their presentation tape recorded or videotaped based upon the availability of equipment. The special education teachers continued to keep an on-going account of each student's progress throughout the duration of the program in their class record books.

An evaluation of the implementation period took place during the

eleventh and twelfth week of the program between the writer and each special education teacher. Teachers used their grade books to assess student progress in the areas of homework and project completion, punctuality, and test grades. They were asked to look for an overall improvement over the previous marking period. The writer held interviews with each of the other eight special education teachers and a random sampling of 50 of the 91 classified students in order to obtain their input concerning the success of the program. Rather than request the teachers and students to complete a questionnaire and participate in an interview and consider it as two separate evaluation procedures as previously proposed, the writer found it more valuable to hold the one-to-one interviews concurrent with the completion of a written questionnaire. In doing so, the writer was able to determine whether or not the teachers and students felt there should be any omissions or addendums to the integrated study skills program.

It was originally expected that the teachers would keep a written log for the purpose of recording the results of their classroom discussion periods with their students concerning study skills that both parties felt needed to be addressed. Five of the nine teachers felt that keeping logs were not necessary as long as they met with the writer on a routine basis. The specific study skills discussed were verbally noted by the teachers during their meetings with the writer and listed for documentation in the writer's log. Lesson plans were used to verify the planned periods of discussion. The writer actively participated as a special education teacher in the developing,

implementing, and evaluation of this practicum.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The writer identified what was believed to be a problem in this particular middle school setting. A majority of the classified seventh and eighth grade students had demonstrated substantial deficiencies in the area of organizational and special study skills in the basic subject areas. The writer believed that the goal of this practicum, to improve the students' overall ability to recognize and appropriately apply meaningful study strategies, could be attained if six outcomes were met. A program was initiated by the writer for the purpose of integrating study skills throughout the core curriculum in special education classes of a middle school in order to achieve the desired results.

The first objective of this practicum was the development of a variety of teaching strategies that would meet the established needs of their students in the area of study skills by the writer and eight other special education teachers in her building. The information obtained from the writer's logging of meetings held with each of the participating teachers recorded that nine of the nine special education teachers in each of the core subjects utilized at least four

successful instructional strategies. For example, the writer, a Reading resource room teacher, incorporated into a repertoire of teaching strategies including a number of hands-on experiences, peer instruction, systematic reinforcement, modeling, and teacher-monitoring of student choices in the planning of the curriculum. One of the Language Arts resource room teachers employed cooperative learning, contingency contracting, prompt feedback, and an allowance for students to exercise their own individual learning style.

Objective two focused on the teachers' abilities to address the various components of the study skills curriculum while drawing from their own area of expertise. Purposeful study skills were to be incorporated into each subject area and a setting aside of specific segments of time for the purpose of meeting these needs. The objective would be met if nine of the nine special education teachers in each of the core subjects would find the skills taught valuable to their students' educational process. The final results achieved this high level of participation as anticipated. Nine of the nine teachers involved in the implementation of this practicum taught various components of the study skills curricula as noted by the writer in their lesson plans (see Appendix E) and verbally confirmed their educational value during our scheduled meetings.

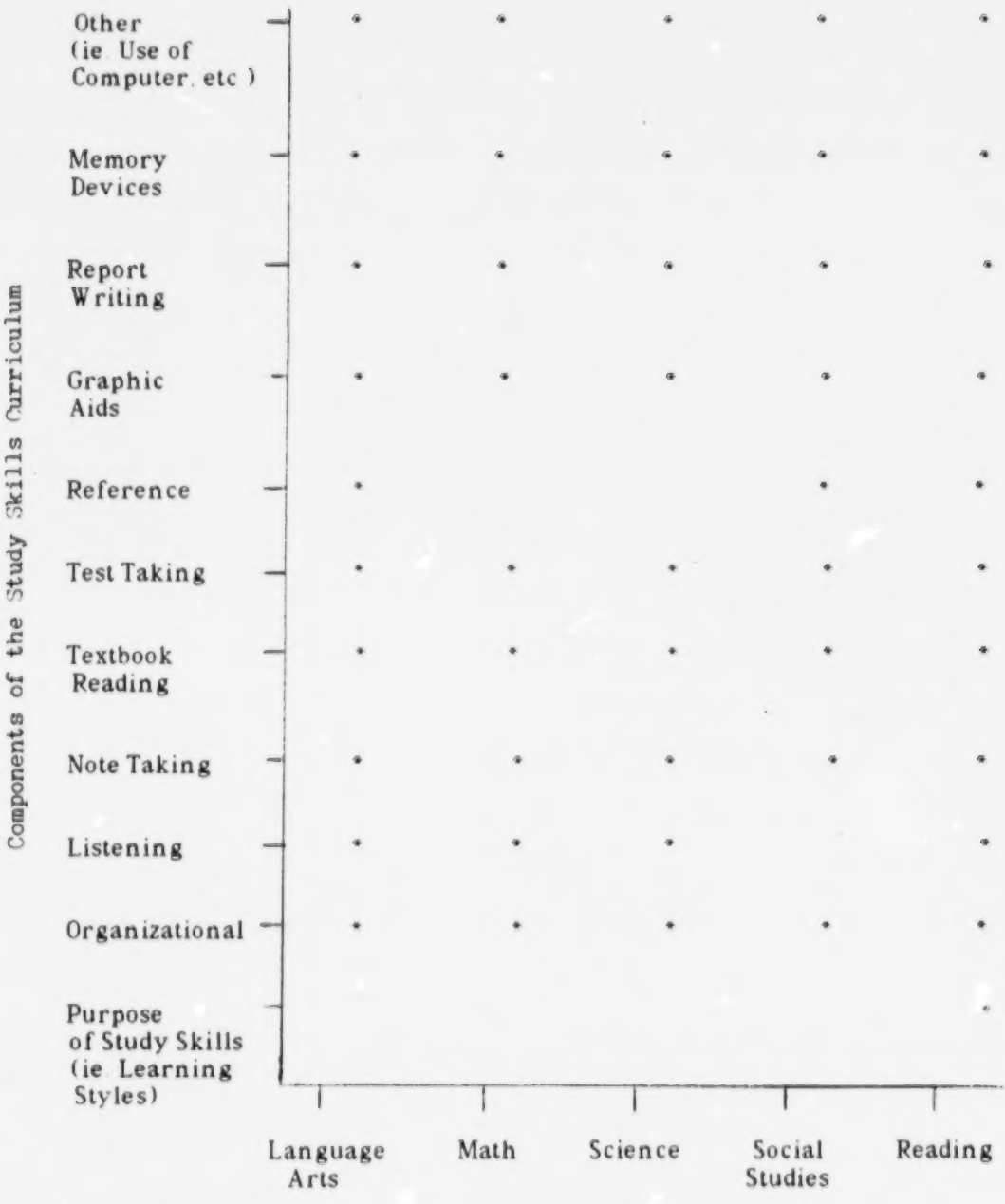
The third objective was the inclusion of at least one class period per week in each of the core subjects in order to provide study skills awareness activities. The subjects belonging to the core curriculum included Language Arts, Mathematics, Reading, Science, and Social Studies. This objective was successfully met as anticipated. Nine of

the nine teachers' lesson plans clearly reflected the incorporation of study skill awareness activities into their weekly objectives and activities as shown in Figure 1 (see Figure 1).

Objective four was aimed at increasing the number of classified students in each special education class at the writer's school who would complete their homework as a result of this program. In order to determine the ability of students to do this, individual student assignment books were routinely checked by all subject area teachers and the completion of assignments was recorded in their class record books. The objective would be met if 40 of the 50 randomly selected students would have completed their homework assignments in a timely fashion across the core curriculum. A sum total of 40 or more students accomplished this goal in the areas of Language Arts, Reading and Science. An average improvement of 45% was noted from the previous marking period of those students randomly selected (see Table 5 for a Summative View of the Homework Findings in Comparison to Last Marking Period in Each of the Core Subjects).

The fifth objective stated that the teachers and students would discuss specific study skills that both groups felt needed to be addressed. It was expected that nine of the nine special education teachers would verbally communicate with the writer, with regards to their class discussions, any information that resulted from those periods when time would be allotted for such activities (see Appendix F). The writer's log kept an account of the various topics based upon the meetings with each teacher and was further

Figure 1



FREQUENCY OF STUDY SKILLS TAUGHT THROUGHOUT THE CORE CURRICULUM IN ONE MARKING PERIOD

Table 5

Summative View of the Homework Findings in Comparison to Last Marking Period in Each of the Core Subjects

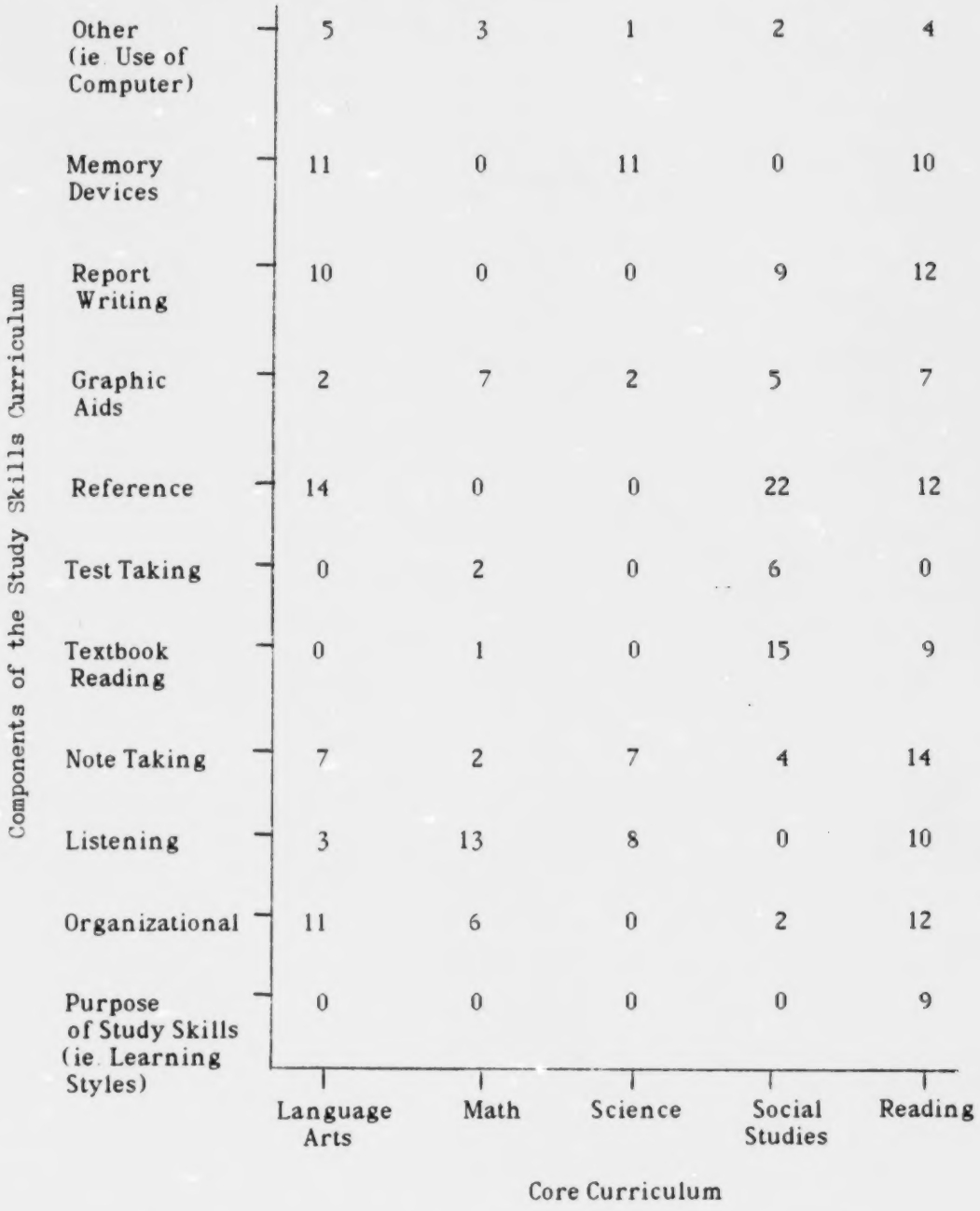
Subject Area/ Grade	Progressed	Regressed	Continued To Complete On Time	Percentage of Improvement (if any)
Language Arts: 7/8	14	10	26	28
Mathematics: 7/8	12	2	15	41
Reading: 7/8	30	9	11	60
Science: 7/8	27	7	16	54
Social Studies: 7/8	13	3	14	43

Note: Several of the classified students are mainstreamed into regular education classes in one or more of the core subjects. This accounts for less than 50 students in Mathematics and Social Studies. The numbers given refer only to those students who attended the self-contained or resource room classes for each subject listed.

documented in each teacher's lesson plans. These results indicate that the fifth objective was met and are indicated in Figure 2 (see Figure 2).

Objective six anticipated that the students would be able to transfer learned study strategies throughout the core curriculum. This was verified through the use of one-to-one student (see

Figure 2


Components of the Study Skills Curriculum
Other (ie. Use of Computer) 5 3 1 2 4
Memory Devices 11 0 11 0 10
Report Writing 10 0 0 9 12
Graphic Aids 2 7 2 5 7
Reference 14 0 0 22 12
Test Taking 0 2 0 6 0
Textbook Reading 0 1 0 15 9
Note Taking 7 2 7 4 14
Listening 3 13 8 0 10
Organizational 11 6 0 2 12
Purpose of Study Skills (ie. Learning Styles) 0 0 0 0 9
Language Arts
Math
Science
Social Studies
Reading
Core Curriculum

NUMBER OF STUDENTS REQUESTING ADDITIONAL REINFORCEMENT IN SPECIFIC STUDY SKILLS IN EACH SUBJECT AREA

Appendix G) and teacher interviews and questionnaires (see Appendix H). Nine of the nine special education teachers rather than seven of the nine, and an average of 34 of the 50, rather than 40 of the 50 classified students responded to the writer's oral and written questions indicating those specific study strategies that they felt were utilized in more than one subject area. These results indicated a higher response by the teachers than anticipated, thus demonstrating a partial fulfillment of this objective. Table 6 illustrates the responses given most often by both the teachers and their students.

Table 6

Number of Responses Indicating the Transference of a Selected Group of Learned Study Strategies

	Response Pattern	
Strategy	Teacher	Student
Organizational Skills	9	34
Note Taking Skills	9	38
Listening Skills	9	35
Test Taking Skills	9	30
Reference Skills	9	34
Memory Devices	9	33

Discussion

The integration of study skills throughout the special education classes in this middle school setting was extremely successful. The teachers incorporated the teaching of far more study strategies into their lesson planning than the writer had anticipated, adding to the enrichment of their individual programs and resulting in a richer and more rewarding educational experience for each of their students. Integrated study skill instruction offered the students valuable tools that could be utilized in a variety of educational settings. The teaching of a multitude of study strategies provided them with the opportunity to explore a number of ways to analyze, organize and summarize different subject matter to assist them in their learning. The positive results of this practicum depended highly upon the collaboration of the special education teachers, their dedication to the implementation of this program, and the cooperative interpersonal relationships between a majority of the students and their teachers. Malena and Atwood (1985) substantiated the writer's belief that cooperation between the teachers and their students was an essential ingredient. The existence of these factors contributed strongly to the success of this project.

Throughout the implementation phase of this practicum, the writer found the recording of events in a log extremely beneficial. The log reflected the students' uses of in-class organizational and study strategies based upon the writer's personal observations and

the discussions held with each of the other special education teachers. Unexpected events and notable changes could be noted immediately and proved to be most valuable for the recollection of such information during the evaluation phase of this practicum.

A review of the writer's log noted that a change was necessary in the evaluation instruments for objective six. Rather than use two separate measures to accumulate data, an interview and a questionnaire, the writer chose to alter the procedure. The questions posed on the questionnaire would have closely resembled those asked during the oral interview, thereby duplicating the efforts. It proved to be a more equitable use of time to blend the two evaluation instruments.

The importance of parental involvement in a child's educational process should not be undermined. An increase in the homework completion of the students randomly selected was indicative, in some instances, of the existence of an ongoing home-school communication. A combination of student participation, teacher monitorization and when necessary, parental cooperation led to the successful attainment of the fourth objective. Dismuke (1991), McCormick (1990), Germain (1991), Davies (1991), and Reutzel and Fawson (1990) all recognized the importance in collaborating the efforts of teachers and parents for the betterment of a student's academic success.

As shown in Table 7, objectives one through five were achieved, the sixth resulted in a partial fulfillment of the original expectations. The writer sought to discover the reason why the sixth objective was

Table 7

Measurement of Objectives

The End Results	Evaluation Tool	Standard of Achievement	Actual Achievement
1. Teachers will develop a variety of teaching strategies that will meet the needs of their students in the area of study skills.	Logged weekly meetings	9 of 9 special education teachers in each of the core subjects will have utilized at least four successful teaching strategies.	9 of 9 special education teachers in each of the core subjects utilized at least four successful teaching strategies.
2. Purposeful study skills will be addressed by the special education teacher in each subject area.	Lesson plans and writer's log	9 of 9 special education teachers in each of the core subjects will find the skills taught valuable to their students' educational process.	9 of 9 special education teachers in each of the core subjects found the skills taught valuable to their students' learning process.
3. Study skills awareness activities reinforcing the study skills curricula will be incorporated into student lessons.	Lesson plans	9 of 9 special education teachers will actively participate in the joint venture.	9 of 9 special education teachers actively participated in the joint venture.
4. An increased number of classified students will complete their homework assignments on time.	Student assignment book and teacher record book	40 of 50 randomly selected students will have completed their homework assignments in a timely fashion.	Four-fifths or more of the randomly selected students completed their homework on time.
5. Teachers and students will discuss specific study skills that both groups feel need to be addressed.	Writer's log and lesson plans	9 of 9 special education teachers will verbally share the results of their discussion periods with the writer.	9 of 9 special education teachers shared the results of their discussion periods with the writer.
6. Students will be able to transfer learned study strategies throughout the core curriculum.	Structured interviews and questionnaire	7 of 9 special education teachers and 40 of 50 students will verbally indicate specific study strategies utilized in more than one subject area.	9 of 9 special education teachers and an average of 34 of 50 students indicated study strategies were utilized in more than one subject.

not met as anticipated. A re-analysis of the objectives, outcomes and three-month implementation period resulted in the writer's realization that the anticipated standard of achievement, 40 of 50 students, was quite high. Given the fact that the results of this practicum were based on only one marking period, 30 of 50, or three fifths of the students randomly selected would have been a far more realistic outcome. Considering the time frame and the fact that 9 of 9 teachers and 60% or more of the students noted the transference of a majority of the learned study strategies, a smaller standard of achievement would have been justifiably acceptable.

The writer believed that the impact of a consistent integration of meaningful study skills, as emphasized by this practicum, would have a longlasting effect on the instructional planning of the teachers and reap the rewards of the increased scope of study strategies to which the students will be exposed. McDonald, Dickerson-Young, and Florey (1986) supported the writer's conclusions that "the more actively involved the student becomes in learning, the more easily he learns and remembers information" (p. III).

Recommendations

One of the greatest gifts that professional educators can offer their students is a strong foundation of study skills upon which their future can be built. Sound study strategies provide our future leaders with the ways and means of succeeding in both the academic arena and the world outside of our institutions of learning. An

integration of these skills throughout their core curriculum can enhance their ability to learn, provide a purpose and motivation to succeed, and result in social, emotional, and academic achievement. The attainment of such high standards require a collaborative effort on the part of the entire community - the administrators, the teachers, the parents, the students, other school personnel, and the continual support of the community at large that is served by the school.

The writer feels confident in promoting the following recommendations:

1. In order to encourage students to actively participate in an after-school study period, the offering of additional incentives such as extra-credit could be initiated. The thought of being a peer tutor after-school could prove to be an incentive for the student to be successful and be viewed by the slower student as less threatening than teacher-assistance.
2. An integrated study skills program should be made available to all students, regardless of grade level. The writer recommends that the program be expanded to include the regular education classes in the middle school and each of the five district elementary schools.
3. The program should have an implementation period of at least one year so that the comparisons drawn are based upon the inclusion of those components of the study skills curriculum that may have been taught during other periods of the school year.

4. A positive and cooperative relationship must exist between school and the home environments for optimum success.

Dissemination

The results of this practicum will be used in a variety of ways. The writer continues a personal commitment to support the integration of study skills throughout the middle and elementary schools in this school district. The implementation procedures and results of this practicum will be shared with department administrators, school principal and the special education teachers who actively participated in this project. The director of special services plans on using this practicum as a rationale before the board of education for the development of a grades 4 through 6 Study Skills curriculum this year. The writer has every intention of being available for the sharing of these findings with any other district personnel or parent organizations that need assistance in the incorporation of meaningful study strategies into their students' or child's repertoire of skills. A copy of this practicum report will remain on file at Nova University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida for the purpose of assisting future Nova doctoral candidates. The writer is currently planning to assist the dean of a private high school in the designing of curriculum and an effective approach to teaching study skills throughout grades nine through twelve.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY FOR TEACHERS

NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY FOR TEACHERS

Please respond to the following statements as accurately as possible. The completion of this document will be helpful in the evaluation of your students' needs. Circle the number that best describes the students that you teach.

1 - Agree
2 - Partially agree
3 - Partially disagree
4 - Disagree

1. Most of the students have little difficulty remembering to complete and turn in their assignments.

   1 2 3 4

2. Many of the students have demonstrated an ability to budget their time wisely.

   1 2 3 4

3. Most of the students have the ability to summarize the main points of an article or passage without assistance.

   1 2 3 4

4. Forgetting or losing pencils, pens, notebooks, textbooks and/or other school supplies doesn't seem to be a problem for many of the students.

   1 2 3 4

5. A majority of the students have demonstrated to me that they do not require additional assistance in how to study for tests.

   1 2 3 4

6. Most of the students know how to analyze and use a textbook effectively.

1 2 3 4

7. In general, I have found few students in need of a program aimed at improving their active listening skils.

1 2 3 4

8. Only a few of the students have difficulty organizing their notebooks, folders, and/or lockers.

1 2 3 4

9. The students are more than capable of outlining a chapter in a textbook.

1 2 3 4

10. Most students demonstrate the ability to take notes from a class lecture without any difficulty.

1 2 3 4

11. The majority of the students have been educated in how to use various library reference materials such as the Reader's Guide, the Almanac, and the Atlas.

1 2 3 4

12. Most of the students have been familiarized with specific test-taking techniques such as the best approach for answering essay questions.

1 2 3 4

13. The students in my classes are knowledgeable in how to develop a cause of action so that they may reach their pre-established short and long-term goals.

1 2 3 4

14. The students in my classes are well aware of what motivators are and how they can be used to improve their grades.

1 2 3 4

NAME _____ POSITION _____ DATE _____

APPENDIX B

STUDY SKILLS SELF-ASSESSMENT INVENTORY FOR STUDENTS

NAME _____ DATE _____

STUDY SKILLS SELF-ASSESSMENT INVENTORY

FOR STUDENTS

Please answer each of the following questions, choosing the word that best describes what you do. This self-assessment inventory will help you to develop or improve upon your organizational and study skill habits. Circle one response for each question.

How frequently do I:

1. Eat well-balanced meals?

   seldom sometimes often

2. Study in an area that is well-lit?

   seldom sometimes often

3. Follow a daily study schedule?

   seldom sometimes often

4. Follow a weekly study schedule?

   seldom sometimes often

5. Plan for daily or weekly review sessions?

   seldom sometimes often

6. Skim through a chapter or portion of a textbook before reading it?

   seldom sometimes often

7. Make up questions on the information I read as I go along?

   seldom sometimes often

How frequently do I:

8. Summarize what I read?

   seldom sometimes often

9. Use reference materials other than the dictionary and the encyclopedia?

   seldom sometimes often

10. Use an assignment book or pad for recording of homework and special projects?

    seldom sometimes often

11. Check to make sure that my subject notebooks are organized?

    seldom sometimes often

12. Actively listen and take notes in class?

    seldom sometimes often

13. Follow a special system when taking notes?

    seldom sometimes often

14. Check to see that my notes are neat and able to be read easily?

    seldom sometimes often

15. Use my notes to review for a quiz or test?

    seldom sometimes often

16. Spend time re-reading my class notes other than for a quiz or test?

    seldom sometimes often

17. Begin my special writing assignments by making up an outline first?

    seldom sometimes often

How frequently do I:

18. Read through each of the questions on a test before answering any of the items?

    seldom sometimes often

19. Run out of time before finishing the questions on a test?

    seldom sometimes often

20. Skip the questions that I am not sure of and go on to answer the easier ones first?

    seldom sometimes often

21. Get a chance to practice using graphs, charts, or tables in my classes?

    seldom sometimes often

22. Use memory games to help me study for a quiz or test?

    seldom sometimes often

23. Actually use the study style that helps me to learn more easily?

    seldom sometimes often

24. Use at least one particular study skill to help me to learn easier in each subject area?

    seldom sometimes often

25. Think about what can done to improve my grades in school?

    seldom sometimes often

APPENDIX C

COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF STUDY SKILLS

COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF STUDY SKILLS

I. Introduction to Study Skills
   - A. Definition
   - B. Value
   - C. Learning Styles

II. Organizational Skills
   - A. Materials and Notebooks
   - B. School Planners
   - C. Study Environment

III. Listening Skills
   - A. Active Listening Skills
   - B. Following Oral Directions
   - C. Listening for Information

IV. Note Taking Skills
   - A. Advantages of Notetaking
   - B. Notetaking Techniques
     1. Mapping Method
     2. Outlining Method

V. Textbook Reading Skills (SQ3R)
   - A. Survey the Textbook
   - B. Formulate Questions
   - C. The 3 R's
     1. Read for Details
     2. Review subheadings and Important Details
     3. Recall Information

VI. Test Taking Skills
   - A. Reasons for taking tests
   - B. Ways to Prepare for a test
   - C. Test Taking Strategies

VII. Reference Skills
- A. Dictionary
- B. Encyclopedia
- C. Thesaurus
- D. Atlas
- E. Readers Guide to Periodical Literature
- F. Computer Search

VIII. Graphic Aids
- A. Graphs
- B. Charts and Tables
- C. Maps

IX. Report Writing
- A. Book Reports
- B. Research Report

X. Methods to Improve One's Memory
- A. Repetition
- B. Visualizing
- C. Categorizing
- D. Mnemonic Devices

XI. Other

APPENDIX D

SAMPLES OF INNER-DEPARTMENT MEMOS AND MONTHLY DEPARTMENT MEETING AGENDAS

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL SERVICES

March 16, 1992

To: Middle School Child Study Team
Middle School Special Education Teachers

From: Supervisor of Special Education

Re: Monthly Department Meeting
Tuesday, March 24th, 2:20 P.M. - Room 125

Realizing this is the day of the blood drive at Central, we will try to meet briefly. Agenda will be as follows:

1. Teaming program - evaluation
   expansion for 92-93 year
2. Homework Pads
3. Grade 6 accountability meetings
4. EWT follow-up
5. 1992-93 Scheduling - Reading/Language Arts Block
   P2R
   School Store
   Programs
   Room Assignments
   Self-contained - 5 subj. class
6. Mentorship Program
7. Special Education Week
8. End-of-year trip?

cc: Director of Special Services
Middle School Principal

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL SERVICES

September 5, 1991

To: Middle School Staff

From: Director of Special Services

re: Study Skills

All Middle School Special Education teachers are reminded that they are to implement the Study Skills Curriculum into their subjects as soon as possible. Make use of the Assignment Notebooks immediately.

Thank you.

IE:cb

cc: Supervisor of Special Services
Middle School Child Study Team

APPENDIX E

SAMPLES OF TEACHERS' LESSON PLANS

Grade 7 - Unit 4,7: Test-taking Hints and activities
and Trivial Pursuit questions.

.....1 Short answer-must be answered in complete sentences. One word is not acceptable. Nor would it be acceptable if the answer were too long.
Give them questions they do not have to research.

.....2 Analogies-Relationships-Know the relationship between the first two words given.
A Red Help-Pg.116
B Opposites-Pg.113
C Book of Lists
D REVIEW IN VOC. WORKSHOP-work in groups-Use as an open book test. Grade each section.-they will have to look in previous units for answers.

In class:Fur:dog as skin:.....
water:thirsty as food:.....
Trenton:New Jersey as Moscow:

.....3 Multiple Choice-Impact-skimming and multiple choice.
Trivia-College Bowl

You know that:
1 answer is definitely right
1 answer is definitely wrong
2 answers are close:
SO WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO IS ELIMINATE.

.....4 Mneumonics-Organize, so that the first letter in each word makes a code for you.
Example: EVERY GOOD BOY DOES FINE.
Teacher goes through parts of a friendly letter.

HEADING H
GREETING G
BODY B CBS HAS STATIONS
CLOSING C MRS. S. BAKES GOOD HOT CHIPS
SIGNATURE S

THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE TO MEMORIZE AND WE'LL MAKE NEUMONIC DEVICES..

.....5 Recall-means memory
Make sure you read the topic sentence.
Example:"There are three ways to make an apple pie."
Make sure you memorize or know those 3 ways.

Evaluate-Take what you kmow and combine it with information given.

What's the last item in this series: J7 F8 M5 A5 M3 J4 J4 A6 S9 O7 N8 (X)? Here's a hint: I didn't say "next item."
—Mike Coppola, Baltimore, Md.

It's D8. The series comprises the first letter of each month of the year and the number of letters in its name. For example, January has seven letters, and December has eight. (Thanks for the hint.)

k4 Hints
See also K3 Trivia

Grade 8 - language arts

Library skills reviewed
Play that tune
Informative speech

Monday-March 23-Follow first week in "Top 40" lesson plans.
Warm-up:
.....1 Name that Tune-Auditory awareness
.....2 Any songs used in unit, put on chart.
.....3 Play tape and write title on sheet-individually or partners.
.....4 Explain "Coming Attractions for the week of Ma.23-27.
.....5 We're going to take a refresher course on how to find reference material quicker and easier.
.....6 Let them know this will be in preparation for class trip to Manalapan Library. Tell them we will "do lunch."
TALK ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS FOR COMING ON THE TRIP
WRITE LETTER TO PARENTS ABOUT TRIP AND THE CONDITIONS.
.....7 Now you're probably saying to yourself, "Ok, Mrs. S., cut to the chase.
.....8 We're going to write a speech about something that you know about or want to learn about. Why a speech you ask?
.....9 Hand out "Introduction to speeches."
.....10 Next week we'll choose the topics and dates for the speeches.
.....11 Remind them to meet in the library on Tuesday.
Tuesday-March 24-card catalog
REMIND THEM OF NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE TRIP
.....1 Hand out activity sheet as soon as they come in.
.....2 Number one is done without instruction.
.....3 Put check by each activity completed.
Wednesday-Career Day for 8th graders

Thursday-March 25-Biographical Dictionaries and current biographies
.....1Explain the differences in Dictionaries.
.....2 They will do a thumbnail biography on people involved in Westside story. 8-10 sentences
Leonard Bernstein-The Man behind the Music Natalie Wood
Jerome Robbins-director and choreographer Rita Moreno
Stephen Sondheim-lyrics
Arthur Laurents-wrote book
.....3 Explain how to do bibliography.
.....4 Give each student:Bibliography sheet
Large index card and info they are to look for.
.....5 Sign up for computers for tomorrow.
.....6 Due Monday.
Friday-March 26
.....1 Complete thumbnail biographies.
.....2 Use computers to type
Next week:
Choose topics and dates for speeches-Continue Media Review
Teach how to do bibliographies
Cosmo Grammar
Use song titles for Grammar worksheet
Voc.workshop-Test-taking Hints-Open book test-K3 analogy
Westside Story-biographies due K4 speech

TEACHER

SUBJECT 7th Sc

MONDAY	Obj- SWBAT Locate the Fertile Crescent. Make observations in the regions 2 major rivers and a map. P-(See Skill Extender pg. 26 TE) E- answer quest. 1-4
TUESDAY	Obj. SWBAT Tell what major changes occurred in the lives of people in the Fertile Crescent around 7000 BC P- Text pg. 25- See Quizlet E- TE.
WEDNESDAY	Obj- SWBAT Identify 2 differences between the life of nomads & the life of farmers P- Discussion + text pg. 26-28 E- Reading Check
THURSDAY	Obj: SWBAT Interpret a diagram. P: See Skill Extender pg. 30 E- Questions 1-2-3
FRIDAY	Obj. SWBAT Name 3 important inventions of the Sumerian civ. P- text pg. 29-3 E- Reading Check

ACHER ROOM No 230 WEEK BEGINNING

Per 1 - Rdg. Gr 7	Per 2 - Rdg. Gr 7	Per 3 - St Skills	Period 4
Obj. the LUDAT Given a map of the class is directed to locate 10 areas of importance Act Each person will use paper, pencil + compass. Draw the map as directed. On ch. 1 and 2 in text book.	Same objective(s) as Period 1	Obj. the LUDAT. Complete exercises using the various parts of speech + word meaning Act (Red Book) pp. 7 + 17 / Discuss + Have it Complete indep. Check over as a class	Teachers Lunch
Obj. the LUDAT be able to recognize and read Ch. 3rd + 4th the class novel with partic Act Discuss "Carcass" and "rightful" and read pp 22-31 orally + discuss the answers		Obj. the LUDAT, rd. + Complete an organizational inventory and discuss sound chapter selections. Act Succ. St. Ld; Class Bk pp. 73-81. Rd + complete exercises discuss in class	
Obj. the LUDAT Complete a test on literature terms of 80% accuracy Act Quiz Kit Test Ind for st compl Eval Collect + grade	Chapter Quiz Mrs	* General support period - to work indiv. or in small groups on various subject matter closed upon need	
Obj. the LUDAT Complete entry #2 in Learning diary and complete n. sheet in Ch. 3+4 Act St will write in diary entry + do crossword puzzle + answer sheet		Obj. the LUDAT rd. + discuss map to successfully plan - ning action research. + goal setting Act Succ. St. Ld. (Bk pp) pp 82-96; pp 3-9. Rd., Complete + discuss	
Obj. the LUDAT be able to the cl map and read sections for comprehension of elements + play Act Quiz map, Worksheet on events + action + play	V	* General support period - Lic. Wednesday	V

*

A. M. SQUIRE CO., MCKEESPORT, PA. WEEKLY LESSON PLANS

Pd. 5 – Rdg. Gr. 8	Pd. 6 – Lg. Rdg. 7/8	Period 7	Pd. 8 – Rdg. Gr. 8
Obj: the LwiDAT choose 10 topics for their news-paper report. Affect: To participate. Act: Brainstorm topics in notebooks. Use 3)	same as period 3	Prep. Period	same objective(s) as Period 5
Obj: the LwiDAT write at least one of two articles contributing toward their finished report. Act: Each Ct. will begin & complete at least 1 story.			
Obj: the LwiDAT write at least one or two add'l articles, empl. the writing process learned in L. Arts. Act: same as above. Encourage students to proofread.			
Obj: the LwiDAT rd & discuss w/ 100% partic. two stories on literary genres. Act: Rd & discuss "Rosie" and "Big Foot."			
Obj: the LwiDAT continue their written work and/or drawings. Continue toward their written report. Act: Show class various newspaper banners.			

*

APPENDIX F

STUDENT AND TEACHER INPUT FORM OF SPECIFIC STUDY SKILLS

STUDENT AND TEACHER INPUT FORM

OF SPECIFIC STUDY SKILLS

Teacher: _____

Subject: _____

Grade Level: _____

Period: _____

Date: _____

Number of Students in Class: _____

Place a check mark for each student who raises his hand indicating the skill he/she feels they need additional help in mastering. Please be sure to address the specific study skills you feel need to be addressed in your *subject area.*

SKILL	**NUMBER OF STUDENTS NEEDING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE**
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____

* Use other side for additional information

APPENDIX G

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE: EVALUATION OF THE STUDY SKILLS COMPONENT OF THE CURRICULUM

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE:
EVALUATION OF THE STUDY SKILLS COMPONENT OF THE CURRICULUM

STUDENT'S NAME: _____ **SUBJECT:** _____

1. What specific skills or learning strategies are you using now in comparison to the beginning of the year?

2. Name at least one of the study skills that you have learned in each of the following subject areas:

Language Arts:

Math:

Reading:

Science:

Social Studies:

Study Skills / General Support:

3. Do you feel that the study skills you have used over the last marking period have led to your *success*, *failure*, or *no change* in your academic success?

4. What study skills, if any, would you like to see your teachers to spend more time teaching in the classroom?

5. Are there any study skills that you feel should not be taught in the middle school?

Student's Name _____ Grade ____ Date _____

APPENDIX H

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE: EVALUATION OF THE STUDY SKILLS COMPONENT OF THE CURRICULUM

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE:
EVALUATION OF THE STUDY SKILLS COMPONENT OF THE CURRICULUM

TEACHER: _____ **SUBJECT:** _____

1. What specific skills or learning strategies are your students using now in comparison to the beginning of the year?

2. Name the study skills that you feel your students have utilized in your classes in your subject area?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

3. Do you feel that the four or more study skills you have emphasized over the last marking period have led to a *successful*, a *failure*, or a *no change* rating in your students' academic success?

4. How many of your students have *progressed*, *regressed*, or *stayed the same* in their overall grade point average and homework completion last marking period?

	# Progressed	# Regressed	# Stayed the Same
Grade Point Average	_____	_____	_____
Homework Completion	_____	_____	_____

Thank you for taking the time to complete the TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE. I will share with you the results of the accumulated data as soon as it is tabulated.

Spec Ed

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